

## Message Text

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15  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 120810Z NOV 76  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AEMBASSY PARIS 8689  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION USBERLIN UNN  
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 7094

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, GW  
SUBJECT: GDR LEADERSHIP CHANGES

REF: BERLIN 7060

1. AT LUNCH NOVEMBER 9, WALLY MORGAN, AN AMERICAN  
PROFESSOR NOW TEACHING AT HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY, GAVE  
CHARGE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME EXPLANATION FOR THE RECENT  
GOVERNMENT CHANGES AS DID KOSIN TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER  
EARLIER (REFTEL). LUNCH CAME AT MORGAN'S INITIATIVE,  
AFTER CHARGE HAD SUGGESTED TO MORGAN AND DR. HAGEN OF  
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AT EMBASSY'S  
ELECTION EVE PARTY THAT GDR SUFFERS LOSS OF CREDIBILITY  
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WHEN SUCH CHANGES OCCUR WITHOUT RATIONAL EXPLANATION.

MORGAN SUBSEQUENTLY CALLED CHARGE TO SAY HE HAD TALKED TO "INFORMED PEOPLE" ABOUT CHANGES AND WANTED TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH CHARGE. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE BASIC KOSIN/MORGAN VERSION IS THE ONE GDR WISHES TO HAVE ACCEPTED BY INTERESTED OBSERVERS.

2. ACCORDING TO MORGAN, WHILE THERE WAS NO OPPOSITION TO HONECKER TAKING ON A GOVERNMENT POSITION TO ENABLE HIM TO PLAY A LARGER ROLE IN GDR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THERE IS ALLEGEDLY SOME CONCERN, AMONG UNNAMED CIRCLES, THAT THIS COULD LEAD TO SOME FORM OF PERSONALITY CULT. PEOPLE REMEMBER THAT ULBRICHT HAD HELD SAME POSITIONS, ALTHOUGH NO ONE WAS COMPARING HONECKER TO ULBRICHT. MORGAN ASSERTED ALSO THAT THERE IS A FAIR AMOUNT OF INTEREST AMONG STUDENTS AT HUMBOLDT CONCERNING THE REASONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT CHANGES, BUT THAT NO EXPLANATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THEM.

3. IN TERMS OF FOREIGN POLICY, UNLIKE KOSIN, MORGAN SAID THAT THE CHANGES WILL RESULT IN A HARDER LINE TOWARD THE FRG, HE SAID THE GDR FEELS IMPELLED TO RESPOND FASTER AND HARDER TO ANTI-GDR STATEMENTS OR ACTIONS MADE BY WEST GERMAN POLITICAL CIRCLES. HE CLAIMED THE GDR LEADERSHIP CONTINUES TO FEEL INSECURE, AND THAT CONTINUAL WEST GERMAN REFERENCES TO "INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS" DRIVE THEM UP THE WALL. HE WAS NOT SPECIFIC, HOWEVER, HOW THIS HARDER LINE MIGHT BE MANIFESTED OR WHETHER THE GDR WOULD ACTUALLY IMPLEMENT SUCH A POLICY IF, IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF FRG/SOVIET RELATIONS, THE SOVIETS WOULD WISH TO FOLLOW A MORE MODERATE LINE. HE CLAIMED FURTHER THAT THE GDR WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE US ALMOST AT ANY COST, BUT THAT "SOME PEOPLE" ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH THE NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION MAY TAKE, PARTICULARLY WHEN NAMES LIKE BRZEZINSKI AND SCHLESINGER ARE MENTIONED AS POSSIBLE MEMBERS OF A NEW ADMINISTRATION.

4. ON THE REASONS FOR SINDERMANN'S DEMOTION, MORGAN SAID HE SIMPLY WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP HARD-DRIVING MINISTERS IN LINE. WHILE THE GDR ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT TOO BAD, EAST GERMANY NEEDED TO PRODUCE MORE AND BETTER QUALITY GOODS IN ORDER TO EXPORT MORE TO THE WEST TO EARN MUCH-NEEDED HARD CURRENCY. IT WAS FELT THAT STOPH WOULD BE BETTER ABLE TO TIGHTEN UP THE SITUATION TO BRING THIS ABOUT. HOWEVER, SINCE SINDERMANN HAS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF POPULARITY AND SINCE THERE IS AN INCREASING FLOW OF PARLIAMENTARY VISITS AS A RESULT OF THE GDR'S NEW STATUS, IT WAS FELT THAT SINDERMANN WOULD

BE ABLE TO FURTHER GDR INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS AS PRESIDENT OF THE VOLKSKAMMER. LIKE KOSIN, MORGAN REJECTED THE IDEA THAT THE VOLKSKAMMER COULD BECOME ANY KIND OF GENUINE DEMOCRATIC FORUM, OR THAT THE REGIME ACTUALLY ENVISAGED SUCH A ROLE FOR IT.

5. COMMENT: WE CONTINUE TO THINK THERE IS MUCH THAT IS PLAUSIBLE IN THE BASIC KOSIN/MORGAN VERSION OF THE REASONS FOR THE CHANGE AND NOTE THAT KOSIN ON NOVEMBER 5 GAVE A MEMBER OF THE FRG REPRESENTATION HERE THE SAME STORY HE HAD GIVEN US THE DAY BEFORE. ON MORGAN'S ASSERTION THAT THE GDR WILL ADOPT A HARDER LINE TOWARD THE FRG, WE THINK IT IS TOO SOON TO TELL. WE NOTE IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THE GDR APPEARS TO BE STAKING OUT A HARDER LINE ON FRG TREATMENT OF EAST GERMAN TRAVELLERS, THREATENING POSSIBLE RETALIATION (SEPTTEL). ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GDR PRESS IS REPORTING FACTUALLY CONTINUING CONTACTS BETWEEN FRG AND GDR TRADE UNIONS. WE ASSUME THE GDR WOULD NOT GO TOO FAR ON A HARDER LINE UNTIL THE CONTOURS OF FUTURE FRG/USSR RELATIONS BECOME CLEARER.

6. WE SEE A SLIGHT DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE KOSIN AND MORGAN VERSIONS REGARDING THE TIMING OF THE CHANGE. KOSIN MAINTAINED THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF SINDERMANN'S POOR PERFORMANCE HAD BECOME SO ACUTE THAT A CHANGE HAD TO BE MADE IMMEDIATELY LEADING TO THE HONECKER SHIFT AS WELL WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE COME AT A LATER DATE. IN CONTRAST, MORGAN DOWNPLAYED THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE GDR ECONOMIC SITUATION AND SAID THAT THE VOLKSKAMMER ELECTIONS HAD PROVIDED A CONVENIENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE RESHUFFLE, THEREBY IMPLYING THAT NO ONE CHANGE HAD LED TO THE OTHERS. POLANSKY

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